

p.m., the Senate resume debate on the above-mentioned amendments; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to Bunning amendment No. 1628; that upon disposition of that amendment, there be 2 minutes of debate prior to a vote in relation to Tester amendment No. 1614, with no amendment in order to either of the above amendments prior to the vote; that upon disposition of the Tester amendment, the Senate then debate consecutively the following amendments listed below and that the debate time on each be limited to 30 minutes equally divided and controlled in the usual form with no amendment in order to any of the amendments enumerated below; that upon the use or yielding back of all time with respect to the amendments listed below, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendments in the order listed; that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled prior to each vote; and that after the first vote in this sequence, the remaining votes be 10 minutes in duration: The listed amendments are Kohl amendment No. 1519, Thune amendment No. 1609, and Cardin amendment No. 1610.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION HOLD

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, more than 30 months ago, prior to his confirmation as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff told me in my office that if confirmed he would move expeditiously to implement the National Emergency Technology Guard—NET Guard—Program. Unfortunately, Secretary Chertoff has failed to honor this pledge.

The idea of NET Guard was born in the aftermath of 9/11, when a number of communications and technology companies told me they wanted to help New York City when it was attacked—and there was no system for using their volunteers. Then-Senator George Allen and I moved on a bipartisan basis to support a program, called NET Guard, that would ensure that volunteers with technology expertise could be fully utilized in future crises. These teams of local volunteers with science and technology expertise would be vital in assisting our communities in responding to attacks on communications networks or recovering from natural disasters. Congress authorized the establishment of NET Guard 5 years ago, in the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

However, DHS has utterly failed to make any visible progress in implementing this critical program. DHS's failure to act in this critical area is inexcusable.

Had the Department followed through and created NET Guard, I believe it could have played a significant role in alleviating the chaos, confusion, and suffering after Hurricane Katrina. Had NET Guard been properly implemented, there would have been teams of volunteers with expertise ready to mobilize instantly to tackle technical challenges in the wake of the storm. Indeed, on an ad hoc basis, companies and individuals with technology expertise did come forward to assist the suffering. I can only imagine how effective these efforts might have been had NET Guard been in place.

Since my meeting with Secretary Chertoff in 2005, my staff and I have been given one excuse after another for delaying implementation of NET Guard. I have been promised briefings that never happen and reports that never materialize. At the outset, I was willing to accept some delay, but that time has passed.

We know that it is only a matter of time before there is another crisis that will put American communities and their critical communication networks at risk. Further delay is unacceptable.

Out of options, I reluctantly feel that I must put a hold on the nomination of Dennis Schrader who has been nominated by President Bush to serve as Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, until the NET Guard Program is up and running nationwide.

It gives me no pleasure to place this hold and I do so grudgingly.

I recognize the importance of the position of Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, but the position didn't even exist for the first 4 years after the Department of Homeland Security was created; it was just created in March. Since then, Mr. Corey Grouber has served as Acting Deputy Administrator, so delaying Mr. Schrader's confirmation while the long-overdue Net Guard Program is put in place will not leave the office leaderless. Mr. Corey Grouber has extensive experience at FEMA, so he can manage for a little longer while the NET Guard Program is established. Unfortunately, I see no evidence that the Secretary intends to uphold his pledge to me, and until he does, I will keep my hold on Mr. Schrader's nomination.

I hope DHS will quickly begin to take action so I can remove this hold and Mr. Schrader's nomination can move through the Senate.

DRIVE ACT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of amendment No. 1572, the DRIVE Electric amendment. Senator SALAZAR is the sponsor. Senators BAYH, BROWNBACK, COLEMAN, KLOBUCHAR, SMITH, CLINTON, ALEXANDER, BIDEN, and I are cosponsors.

I know I speak for my fellow DRIVE Act cosponsors when I thank the members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, led by Chairman BINGAMAN and Ranking Member DOMENICI, for reporting versions of DRIVE Act provisions out of that committee in May. And I know my fellow DRIVE Act cosponsors are as gratified as I am that Chairman BINGAMAN and 62 other Senators voted Tuesday to adopt the DRIVE Act's original oil savings requirement as part of this Energy bill.

During the debate preceding Tuesday's vote, Senator DOMENICI said that Congress should not abdicate its responsibility to spell out the policies that the Federal Government will use to achieve the oil savings targets that now are part of this Energy bill. I could not agree more. That is why my DRIVE Act cosponsors are back here today to boost the Energy bill's transportation electrification provisions up to their original DRIVE Act strength.

Once restored to its original strength, the DRIVE Act's electrification program will give the Federal Government a vital tool that will take this Nation a considerable distance toward the oil savings targets that the Senate adopted on Tuesday.

Currently, our transportation sector runs on oil. That is the problem the Senate is trying to solve with this Energy bill. We are passing a law in order to move our transportation sector off of oil, in part by moving it onto alternative fuels. In expanding the use of various alternative fuels, we should not overlook our own existing electrical grid.

Most electricity generation in this country is fueled by domestically mined coal. A substantial amount of electricity generation in this country is fueled by uranium mined in the United States or Canada. While only a small amount of electricity is generated in the U.S. using renewable sources such as solar and geothermal energy, we know we can increase that amount substantially. Only 2 percent of the electricity generated in this country is generated using oil.

So the more that we use electricity to power our cars, trucks, trains, and ships, the more we will be using domestic energy sources, and the less dependent we will be on oil. Fortunately, the technology is now available to allow us to plug in our cars at night, when existing powerplants are underused and electricity is especially cheap, so that during the day, the cars run largely on battery power. And the technology is now available to allow trucks to plug in at truck stops—and ships to plug in at ports—so that they don't use oil to run their on-board systems when they're stationary.

The founder of a U.S. company called A123 testified before my global warming subcommittee in May about durable, safe, light-weight, high-capacity batteries his company has developed for vehicle use. He is using that technology to convert hybrid vehicles into